United Nations A/71/655

General Assembly

Distr.: General
7 December 2016

Original: English

Seventy-first session
Agenda item 68 (c)
Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives

Letter dated 30 November 2016 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith the statement delivered by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on draft resolution A/C.3/71/L.24, on the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic, adopted on 15 November 2016 by the Third Committee (see annex).

I would appreciate it if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 68 (c).

(*Signed*) Gholamhossein **Dehghani**
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Annex to the letter dated 30 November 2016 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on draft resolution A/C.3/71/L.24, on the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic, adopted on 15 November 2016 by the Third Committee

Apart from the unfair and politically motivated approach adopted by the sponsors of the draft resolution on human rights in Syria, which is objectionable in its own right, draft resolution A/C.3/71/L.24 contains provisions that run counter to the basic principles of international law and steer the Third Committee away from its statutory course.

The content of paragraph 24 of the draft resolution sinisterly libels and condemns precisely those who are in Syria to fight against ISIS and the Al-Nusrah Front, newly dubbed Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, and their affiliates. In doing so, the paragraph blurs the line between terrorists and those who heroically fight them back and creates confusion regarding United Nations designated terrorist groups. Two of the forces that are mentioned in paragraph 24 are part of the regular armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, deployed in Syria on an exclusively advisory basis at the formal invitation of the Government of that country, and who are resisting the terrorist onslaught in Syria.

The accusations levelled in the above-mentioned paragraph, apart from being totally baseless, have nothing to do with the mandate of the Third Committee nor are they compatible with the title of the draft resolution, which purports to deal with human rights in Syria. The incorporation of the accusations into this draft cannot amount to anything other than a kind of revenge against those who have so far been the most effective force on the ground against terrorism and violent extremism — a force that, if it were not for its genuine and resolute fight against terrorism, more of the Middle East would have by now fallen under the black flag of Daesh.

Who could believe that the main sponsors of the draft resolution, in particular Saudi Arabia, are concerned about human rights in Syria, while during the last one and a half years they were busy wreaking havoc in Yemen, turning it from deprivation to devastation through indiscriminate aerial bombing of civilian targets and residential areas, ironically claiming to be invited to do so.

The General Assembly and the Third Committee should not be exploited to meet the political goals of the countries whose main concerns are either losing their strategic grip on the region or losing the billions of dollars they have spent in nurturing terrorists in Syria and its neighbouring countries, as well as the destiny of thousands of their citizens that are fighting as foreign terrorist fighters against the Syrian people and Government.

Ultimately, the people of Syria will defeat the terrorists and their allies, the same allies that are sending encouraging messages to their vicious forces in Syria through abusing the Third Committee platform and the adoption of this absurd draft resolution, a draft resolution that is nothing but a reward to violent extremism and

terrorism and to those who have helped them through their extreme ideologies and corresponding financial and logistical resources in the past many years.

It is also peculiar that a number of countries in the West who claim the high ground in preaching to others about human rights have sided with those who, at the very least, have always been the source of exported intolerance to other parts of the world, the very intolerance that is, in turn, the major source of violent extremism and terrorism. Let alone what they do with their own citizens inside their borders. It is very unfortunate that, at the same time, the structural weakness of the United Nations human rights mechanisms is giving them the opportunity to abuse the system and have such resolutions passed.

Those who initiated this draft resolution shall rest assured that this and similar acts will not dissuade the Islamic Republic of Iran from its fight against violent extremism and its determination to fight extremists who try to sow terror in the neighbourhood and export it to the entire world.